

EMPIRE CITY, KANSAS, Feb. 24, 1880.

Editor National Tribune:

Sir: "For as much as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us," as the old veteran soldiers of the Mexican war, "pertaining to things concerning J. A. Bentley and his Sixty Surgeon Bill," as an old veteran soldier it seemed good to me also to write unto THE TRIBUNE to raise my voice against that infamous Sixty Surgeon Bill, and to write in behalf of the old veterans who were in the war with Mexico.

Thirty-three years have rolled off the thread of time, and many of my fellow soldiers have gone down to the silent tomb; yet, a few of us are living under disease and the infirmities of old age. And yet our Government (or Congress) has not granted us a pension to alleviate our indigent condition. But we are still contending for the rights of the soldiers, and we think it is time that Congress "think upon us, (soldiers), that we perish not" by the neglect of the Government's doing what we believe is right in granting the old Mexican soldiers a pension from their discharge to the present time and to the end of their days, which will not be many. Will Congress pay the pension? How our hearts would "leap for joy" to hear that the Government will pay her soldiers a just recompense for their services. And as to that wicked Sixty Surgeon Bill—oh! what man with the heart of a true patriotic American could manufacture such an abominable scheme to swindle our soldiers. Should it pass, then farewell poor soldiers' widows and orphans. You stand as good a chance of getting a pension as the devil does of getting back into heaven. That Board of Doctors will know no more of your disease than John A. Bentley knows of the duty of an honest and just Commissioner. The doctors and lawyers would have you go to Tennessee and hunt up the army surgeon (dead or alive) in the Mexican war to prove that you were a sound man when you went into the army. Then from Tennessee to Texas; then from Texas to Arkansas, and from Arkansas to where you are now, to get testimony that you have been afflicted with the rheumatism, for days and weeks, ever since you were discharged from the war Mexico—all because Mr. Bentley cannot credit the testimony of soldiers, their home surgeons, and neighbors, who know all about their cases.

We old veterans despise and stamp in the dust Bentley's Sixty Surgeon Bill. And hoping this will find a place in your excellent paper, I will leave Mr. Bentley with the "old prophet at Bethel" till Congress defeats his pet bill.

Yours, truly,

DAVID THOMASON.

PECATONICA, ILL., February 16, 1880.

Editor National Tribune:

Sir: I have been reading the articles from soldiers in all parts of the country in the columns of your paper, and have thought much of the many wrongs perpetrated on us by our Commissioner of Pensions. We went into the army to fight in a just cause, we thought, but when we removed the shackles from the black slave we seemed to put them on our own shoulders, for we are the slaves now—slaves to our diseases and slaves to John A. Bentley. Our Government has promised relief; it comes very slow. We are now sending a great deal of money to Ireland to keep the Irish people from starving, while we are letting our old soldiers starve to death by the want of their just dues from the Government. Not only starving, but dying for the want of sufficient clothing and fuel to keep them warm. Some of them are so poor that they cannot get postage to write a letter to their friends. It is a shame to our Government, when we stood up through thick and thin and saved it from destruction. Yours, with respects,

B. F. K.

NEW LONDON, CONN., Feb. 9, 1880.

Editor National Tribune:

Sir: Having had the privilege of reading what I consider is the soldier's friend, THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE—if it is not taking up too much space in your paper, I should like to say a few words. I do wish that we had some other man at the head of the Pension office for he surely is not fitted for the place. I would wish he had been in the front at Gettysburg, July 4, 1863. Had he been he would now be more willing to recognize a soldier's claim. I write this knowing that there are many men who have seen hard service, and gathered disease. Also those who have honorable wounds, that deserve a pension. But they are likely to die before the Commissioner of Pensions, J. A. Bentley, relieves them. I served all through the war, from July, 1862, until the end of the war, and as my regiment was in thirty-two engagements and never having received any bounties excepting the one under the act of July 1863, I feel that all soldiers should be awake in regard to the equalization of bounties. Hoping that you will give this space in your paper, I am respectfully yours.

GEO. A. BUDDINGTON.  
Late of Co. H, 14th Conn. Vols.

ROCKFORD, KENT CO., MICH., Feb. 9, 1880.

Editor National Tribune:

Sir: In your January issue I observe there are many voices raised by the soldiers against the Sixty Surgeon Bill, and while John A. Bentley is raising his voice, I think he alone advocates it. I feel it to be my right as a plain private soldier who done his duty to the country in the hour of its peril, to denounce the injustice and iniquity of his bill. I do not see how Mr. Bentley can have any feeling or sympathy for a soldier when he sustains such a measure. I understand he was not in the war, and this may account for his action. Now if Mr. Bentley had perished his life to do a certain party a great favor upon promise to be amply rewarded and the favor had been done, though the party lost health and suffered hardship, and Mr. Bentley had "gone back" upon this man, what would the whole world say? Why shame! Now we fought once to save the country, and we propose now to fight legally and at the polls for our rights. Soldiers, rally and unite all over the country for the preservation of our rights.

Yours truly,

H. W.

HANCOCK, HARRISON CO., IND., Jan. 28, 1880.

Editor National Tribune:

Sir: I am a soldier and a pensioner, and was entitled to the arrears of pension. I was getting eight dollars per month, but with the rest of the old soldiers, I was cut down to six dollars per month, a loss to me of \$204.5. A grander steal never was done. Bentley has no more right to cut down pensions than I have. Next comes his Sixty Surgeon Bill, and any man who introduces such a bill in the House of Representatives, to starve the poor soldier, ought to be court-martialed by a jury of twelve old pensioners. The verdict would be death. I see all of these wrongs mentioned in your nice little TRIBUNE. It is the best paper in the world. I am doing all I can to get soldiers to take your paper. Please do all you can to get Congress to keep that man Bentley from cutting down pensions, and those who have been cut down ought to have the money out of which they were cheated.

Your true friend,

AN OLD SOLDIER.

TAYLORSVILLE, SPENCER CO., KY., Feb. 27, 1880.

Editor National Tribune:

Sir: Every step taken and every bill proposed by John A. Bentley tends to the ruin of the interests of the poor ex-soldiers of the country. The workings of his Sixty-Surgeon Bill will be tantamount to saying that those who are rich can have their claims admitted as just (for they have the means to travel, and can pay their witnesses in advance); but the poor soldiers, widows, and orphans must be left out, as they have no means to travel on. This, of course, will be a great saving to the Government; but is it honest—is it honorable? No; a thousand times no. The bill cut off a large portion of the soldiers, widows, and orphans of this State. While we in Kentucky admire President Hayes's administration, we condemn him without measure for keeping in J. A. Bentley as Commissioner. Now we respectfully request his removal and that the President appoint a soldier who has lost a leg, an arm, or an eye in the late war, with a sound head and an honest heart and in sympathy with the soldiers, widows and orphans. The present Commissioner is not in sympathy with either. He proposes to let all know his when and whereabouts of holding his august body of doctors and lawyers. Now how many poor soldiers, widows, or orphans who are not able to take a newspaper would know when and where to meet this Bentley court. If they did know, they would be constrained to stay at home, having no money to defray expenses of themselves and witnesses, saying: "Well, my claim must fail." But it is unjust to be treated so. J. A. Bentley is the cause. Soldiers, widows, and orphans will rise up to testify against so unjust an officer. You can dispose of this article as you think best.

Yours respectfully,

SARAH B. A. JEWELL.

VIRGINIA, CASS COUNTY, ILLINOIS, February 24, 1880.

Editor National Tribune:

Sir: A sample copy of your worthy paper came to hand a day or two since, and it is a very welcome visitor indeed. It has many excellent communications from soldiers in different parts of the Union, in which I have been much interested. Surely it ought to be in the hands of every old soldier, and, in fact, all loyal citizens, and would do the disloyal good if they would read it and give heed to its teaching, for it really appears that there

are those who once loudly professed to be our friends, whose acts now would indicate that they are not only traitors to the soldiers, but enemies to Uncle Samuel, whose life has been so nobly and gallantly defended in the past, saved from assassination, rescued on more than a thousand battle-fields while contending with a foe just as fierce and just as determined to strike him down. And he is solid, glorious and invincible in his stately steepings as he glances over the tented fields. But he is known to you that the soldiers have rights and interests that Uncle Sam will not ignore if his honest plans, ways, and means are not defeated by professed friends. Many of the living, though diseased and wounded, soldiers may yet be killed in the House of their friends. What meaneth this Sixty-Surgeon Bill, these secret unreliable detectives and the large number of pets and blood-suckers, who never knew anything of prison life or the privations incident to the life of a soldier? Why this delay in the honest settlement of claims for pension? Mr. J. A. Bentley must know that great injustice is being done to every honest claimant. I wonder who will be first to rise and explain. Your correspondent knows of a number of disabled soldiers who stay here will be brief, owing to the loss of their greatest treasure—health. Yet still their claims hang fire, often after the most substantial and reliable proofs have been furnished to those in authority. It is true that some were injured, and permanently, too, early in the morning of their enlistment, and thus were prevented from following up their desires and intentions during their three years of intended service, but it was not their fault; and there is no good reason why they should not receive as careful and prompt attention as those more fortunate. There are men in this country who suffer more from injuries received and diseases contracted in the beginning of the war than if they had been severely wounded, necessitating amputation. The other day I heard a soldier with one leg off (lost at Shiloh) say to another soldier, who was afflicted by disease, that he was enjoying splendid health, and would rather have lost the other leg than to be as his friend is, though he was able to move about from place to place, having both legs and both arms. It is to be hoped that there will be a reform in the pension department soon, and that it will be so that men can find out whether they are to get something or nothing—so that they will not be required to lie on the cooling board before their claims are allowed or rejected. It is to be hoped that Congress will take the kinks out of some of the subordinates of Uncle Samuel, and that the fine old proprietor will be himself again—humble and kind as in days of yore. If our distinguished forefathers of the Revolution and later wars, who have long since gone to their reward, could rise from the dead and behold the dishonesty and fraud in high places they would draw back in horror and disgust at the scene: if they could but know it now they would turn over in their coffins. What would Jackson say if he could speak to Mr. Bentley and others? What would Hamilton say? What would Jefferson say? What would Henry Clay say? Daniel Webster, Tom Benton, and hundreds of others? Last—and greatest, in my opinion—what would be the language of the martyred Lincoln? Let us hope for better things in the future, and that Mr. Bentley will change the entire machinery.

J. S. H.,  
A Union Soldier.

### Who are and Who are not Entitled to Bounty Under Existing Laws.

As we are constantly in receipt of inquiries concerning Bounties, we publish the subjoined remarks for the information of our readers, who are advised to paste the same in their scrap-books, for ready reference, provided they do not keep a regular file of the paper:

It should be understood that the following remarks apply principally to VOLUNTEERS: Those who entered the REGULAR ARMY were placed on a somewhat different footing as to bounty. Any inquiries from Regulars will be answered in Correspondents' Column.

CLASS 1. Those who enlisted in the Army for THREE years between May 4, 1861, and July 22, 1861, and who were actually mustered into the United States service prior to August 6, 1861, and who were discharged on account of disease contracted in the line of duty, and musicians enlisted and mustered as above and discharged by reason of discontinuance of bands, before a service of two years, are entitled to \$100 bounty, provided they have not received the same. (See Act April 22, 1872.)

REMARKS: This class are not entitled to the ADDITIONAL bounty provided by the act of Congress approved July 28, 1866.

Heirs are not entitled to this Bounty, nor are soldiers who were discharged on account of a disability which existed at the time of enlistment.

CLASS 2. Those who enlisted in the Army for either two or three years between April 12, 1861, and October 24, 1863, in old regiments (those which had already left the State) and those who enlisted for a term of two or three years between April 12, 1861, and December 24, 1863, in new regiments (those which had not left the State) and those who enlisted between April 1, 1864, and July 18, 1864, became entitled to \$100 bounty, provided they served two full years as ENLISTED MEN or were discharged by reason of WOUNDS, OR INJURIES IN THE NATURE OF WOUNDS, incurred while in the line of duty, or on account of Government no longer requiring their services or by reason of expiration of term of enlistment.

REMARKS: Men of this class discharged before full two years service to accept commissions, forfeit the bounty; also those who were discharged by reason of a disability which existed at time of enlistment, or by reason of minority, by way of favor, or dishonorably.

Heirs of soldiers of this class who die in the service are entitled to this bounty, provided they have not received the same.

This class, and this class only, are entitled to the additional bounty, act of July 28, 1866; but a discharge to accept a commission, is a bar to the payment of the additional bounty.

CLASS 3. Those who enlisted after July 18, 1864, were promised a bounty of \$100 for one (1) year, \$200 for two (2) years, and \$300 for three (3) years. This bounty was due and payable as follows: One third at the muster-in; one third at the first regular pay-day after serving one-half the term of enlistment, and the remaining one-third at the expiration of term of enlistment.

REMARKS: A soldier who did not serve one-half of his term of enlistment did not become entitled to the second installment of this bounty, and the third installment did not become due unless he served out his full term or was discharged on account of a wound or an injury in the nature of a wound. If discharged by reason of a DISEASE the unaccrued installments were forfeited. This class are not entitled to the additional bounty provided by the act of July 28, 1866.

Promotion to the grade of commissioned officers cut off the unaccrued installments of this bounty.

CLASS 4. Those who enlisted for a period of three (3) years between October 24, 1863, and April 1, 1864, in old regiments, (those already in the field), and those who enlisted in new regiments those which had not left for the field, between December 24, 1863, and April 1, 1864, became entitled to bounty as follows: \$60 advance at time of muster-in; \$40 when two (2) months had been served; \$40 after six (6) months' service; \$40 after twelve (12) months' service; \$40 after eighteen (18) months; \$40 after twenty-four (24) months' service and \$40 at the expiration of term of enlistment—making a bounty of \$300.

REMARKS: Heirs of soldiers of this class who die in the

service are entitled to the installments remaining unpaid at the date of the soldier's death.

This class are not entitled to the additional bounty act of July 28, 1866.

Promotion to the grade of commissioned officer cuts off the unaccrued installments.

Those of this class discharged by reason of disease are not entitled to the unaccrued installments; but if discharged on account of a wound or injury in the nature of a wound, or by reason of services being no longer required, or on account of expiration of term of enlistment, they become entitled to the full \$300 bounty. Those discharged on account of a disability which existed at time of enlistment, or by way of favor, or by reason of minority, or dishonorably, have no title to the bounty.

CLASS 5. Those who after having rendered full nine (9) months continuous service in the army, after April 12, 1861, received an honorable discharge, and afterwards re-enlisted in another organization for three years, between January 1, 1863, and April 1, 1864, (enlistments in the Veteran Reserve Corps excepted,) are, if not already mustered as veteran volunteers, entitled to be placed on the rolls of the regiment in which they enlisted the second time as VETERAN VOLUNTEERS. Such change of record would entitle them to a further bounty of \$100 or \$200, or less, according to the date of their second enlistment and the period of actual service.

Heirs of this class can effect a veteran muster and recover the further bounty.

This class are not entitled to the additional bounty—act of July 28, 1866.

CLASS 6. Drafted men, and substitutes for men who had actually been drafted, who entered the service for a term of THREE YEARS between March 3, 1863, and September 5, 1864, became entitled to \$100 bounty, provided they served two full years as enlisted men, or were discharged on account of wound or injury, or by reason of close of war or expiration of term of service.

This class have no title to the additional bounty, act of July 28, 1866.

CLASS 7. Those embraced in CLASS 2, became entitled to \$50 or \$100 ADDITIONAL bounty, (Act of July 28, 1866,) according to whether term of enlistment was for two or three years, and the length of service, PROVIDED they have not received, nor are entitled to receive a greater bounty than \$100 for all service. The receipt of United States bounty in excess of \$100 excludes from the benefits of the ADDITIONAL BOUNTY ACT OF JULY 28, 1866.

Those who enlisted as in "Class 2," and who were transferred to the Navy or Marine Corps, are not entitled to the additional bounty, notwithstanding the fact that they are entitled to the original bounty.

A soldier who accepted a commission forfeited this bounty.

Heirs of soldiers of this class who died in the service are entitled to this bounty.

GENERAL REMARKS. An uncancelled charge of desertion on the muster-rolls is a bar to the payment of any bounty. The charge must be removed, or modified to "absence without leave," before bounty can be collected.

DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE carries with it forfeiture of bounty, as well as pay and other allowance.

Those who enlisted for ONE HUNDRED DAYS, or for THREE, SIX, or NINE MONTHS, are not entitled to bounty for such enlistments, nor are those who enlisted for ONE YEAR PRIOR TO JULY 18, 1864.

Those who were drafted for one year, and their substitutes, are not entitled to bounty.

No bounty has been provided for those who enlisted into the Navy or Marine Corps prior to July 18, 1864. Enlistment after that date brings them in CLASS 3.

Confederate prisoners of war who enlisted into the Federal service in either of the six regiments of "United States Volunteers," are not entitled to any bounty, but deserters and prisoners from the Confederate Army who enlisted into any Federal State organization are entitled.

Any person can, by a careful perusal of the foregoing remarks (unless there is some peculiarity connected with his case) determine whether he is entitled to any further bounty.

The Equalization Bounty Bill now before Congress purposes to grant to late enlisted men eight and one-third dollars bounty a month for each month of service, deducting all United States bounty heretofore paid. Eight and one-third dollars bounty a month is equal to \$100 bounty a year. Any of our readers who desire to learn the amount of bounty to which they will be entitled should the Equalization Bill become a law, should multiply the number of months of actual service by eight and one-third dollars, and from the product subtract the amount of bounty already received from the United States. The remainder (if any) will show the amount they will be entitled to receive if the bill becomes a law.

We trust that this bill will pass in such a shape as to grant to those who were discharged on account of disability incurred in the service, or by reason of the Government no longer requiring their services, the same amount of bounty as though they had served their full term. Since the Equalization of Bounty Bill as introduced may be very materially amended before it is enacted into a law, it is idle to speculate as to what classes will be embraced in its benefits.

N. B. Our readers will observe that the foregoing article appears in this number in a somewhat modified form. In spite of every care and precaution on our part, typographical errors have crept into previous numbers and, in a very few instances, persons have not found their cases exactly covered. The foregoing article should be substituted for the article in our previous issues.

### ADVERTISEMENTS.

R. G. THOMPSON, formerly chaplain 64th O. V. V. I., now of Kingsville, Johnston County, Missouri, desires present address of STEPHEN I. YOUNG, M. D., late surgeon 79th Ill. Inf. Vol.

JAS. T. MOORE, Street Road, Essex County, New York, wishes to learn the present address of Head Surgeon O'CONNERS and Assistant Surgeon HAZENBURGH.

WM. M. RUSCO, of Eaton Rapids, Michigan, desires the present address of E. P. DAVISON or THOMAS TATE, formerly of Co. I, 3d Mich. Inf.

WILLIAM DICKEY WILSON, of Upper Alton, Madison Co., Ill., (Box 75,) wishes present P. O. address of Capt. WILLIAM D. WILSON, 1st Lieut. JOHN A. M. COX, Orderly Serg. JAS. O'CONNOR, or any private of Co. D, Marine Reg. U. S. Vol., war of 1861.

JOHN J. WHITE, Oswego, N. Y., desires present address of TIMOTHY TUBBS, late Capt. 118th N. Y. Colored Troops, December, 1865.